

VETO MESSAGE

March 1, 1875.¹¹

Hon. R. B. Hubbard, President of the Senate:

Sir—I return herewith, without my approval, Senate bill No. 638, and respectfully ask its reconsideration. This bill provides for the issuance, by the county court of Travis county, of bonds in the sum of \$150,000, to bear ten per cent. per annum interest, and run twenty years, the proceeds of their sale to be devoted to the construction of a courthouse and jail.

I object to this bill for the following reasons:

First—It was the conviction of the Fourteenth Legislature, in which I concurred, that it was expedient to pass a general law authorizing county courts to tax the people for the purpose of raising money to erect and repair courthouses and jails, in view of the late constitutional amendment forbidding special legislation on subjects which may be provided for by general law, and accordingly on the 6th day of April, 1874, a law was passed authorizing a tax not to exceed one-third of one per cent. in any one year for this general purpose, which law is now in force, and is believed to be adequate to the wants of Travis county in this regard.

Second—I see no reason for excepting Travis county, from the operation of this general law which would not equally apply to any other county in the State, and I believe it unwise and inexpedient to authorize bond issues throughout the State for this purpose, and the special legislation that would be required, it is thought, would be of extremely doubtful constitutionality.

Third—the \$150,000 of bonds provided for by the bill, if sold at 85 cents net on the dollar, which is at least as high as it is believed they will sell, will produce \$127,500. In twenty years the interest to be paid on these bonds will amount to \$300,000. Add to this the principal, \$150,000, also to be paid, and the total \$450,000 is the amount the taxpayers of Travis county must pay, while realizing only \$127,500. The sinking fund and interest to be paid annually by Travis county for twenty years, if these bonds are issued, will amount to \$18,000, leaving at the end of that time a considerable amount of the principal unpaid. As a financial transaction, I believe this would be unwise and improvident.

Fourth—I believe the amount provided by this bill for building a courthouse and jail extravagant, and that the rate of interest prescribed for the bonds, is excessive.

Fifth—On general principles of public policy, the practice of issuing bonds and creating debt by the counties is believed to be inexpedient, as leading to extravagance, often to speculation, and always to onerous taxation, greatly disproportioned to the benefits received.

RICHARD COKE.

¹¹Senate Journal, 446-448.